

REMARKS

Claims 1-4, 6-23, 25-30, 32 and 34-37 are pending herein.

By this Amendment claims 1-2, 14-15, 18-19, 25, 29-30 and 32 are amended to incorporate allowable subject matter. Claims 6-7, 26, and 35-37 are amended to change their dependencies and claims 5, 24, 31, and 33 are canceled.

No new matter is added by this Amendment. Support for the language added to the claims is found in the original specification and claims. In particular, support for the language added to claims 1, 2, 14 and 15 is found in the original claim 5. Support for the language added to claims 18 and 19 is found in original claim 24. Support for the language added to claims 29 and 30 is found in the original claim 31. Support for the language added to claim 25 is found in the original claim 18. Support for the language added to claim 32 is found in original claim 29.

I. Drawing Objections

The Office Action requires that the Figure 2 be labeled as Prior Art. Applicants note that Figure 48 was also not labeled as Prior Art.

Accordingly, Figs. 2 and 48 are corrected by substitute sheets herein. Therefore, withdrawal of the drawing correction requirement is respectfully requested.

II. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants note with appreciation that claims 5-8, 24-28 and 31-32 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Specifically, claims 5, 24-25, and 31-32 were indicated to be allowable by the Examiner for various reasons.

To this end, claims 1, 2, 14, and 15 are each amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of original claim 5. Claims 18 and 19 are each amended to incorporate the

allowable subject matter found in original claim 24. Further, claims 29 and 30 are each amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of original claim 31. Claim 25 is amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of original claim 18. Also, claim 32 is amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of original claim 29.

As acknowledged by the Patent Office, at least claims 1-2, 14-15, 18-19, 25, 29-30, and 32 are allowable. Further, claims 3-4, 6-13, 16-17, 20-23, and 26-28 are allowable as they depend on allowable independent claims.

III. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §112, Second Paragraph

Claim 21 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite. In particular, the Office Action alleges that the specification language is unclear in view of claim 21. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Referring to pages 31-33 of the specification and Figure 8 of the present application, Applicants submit that the specification describes that if the number of the S'th threshold data piece and a later of the M threshold is less than P, the threshold data selection means selects the S'th threshold data piece and the later of the M threshold data piece plus the data threshold data pieces consecutively starting at the top of the threshold data and outputs a total of P threshold data pieces. Referring to page 32 of the specification, Figure 8 is referenced and described. As shown in Figure 8, the unit of threshold data pieces output to a plurality of comparison means is illustrated before a shift register 2p occurs. Here, threshold data pieces 1p through 210p are illustrated. The threshold data pieces 1p through 208p are output to a plurality of comparison means. Here, threshold data pieces 209p and 210p are shifted after termination of the first shift. Accordingly, threshold data pieces 209p, 210p and 1p-208p are shown after termination of the first shift. Threshold data pieces 209p, 210p and 1p-206p are now output to a plurality of comparison means by the second shift. After termination of the second shift, threshold data pieces 207p and 208p are shifted so that they will be output to a

plurality of comparison means with the third shift. Accordingly, as illustrated in Figure 8, if the start pixel position of the selected threshold data is subtracted from the total number of threshold data pieces in a scanning line for processing, this value would be less than the number of pixels of halftone data generated at the same time. In other words, the claim language satisfies the relationship $(M-S'th) < P$.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that the claim language is clear in view of the specification and Figures, at least at pages 31-33 and Figure 8. If the Examiner requires further clarification, the Examiner is invited to contact the Applicants' representatives as indicated below.

Further, with respect to the allegation that the term "the later" in claim 21 lacks insufficient antecedent basis, Applicants herein amend claim 21 to replace "the later" with (a later).

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit the requirements of the Patent Office have been met. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are thus respectfully requested.

IV. Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

A. FUJII

Claims 1-4, 9-13, 16, 21-23 and 29-30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Fujii et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,781,308 (hereinafter Fujii). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

As discussed above and as acknowledged by the Patent Office, claim 5 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Therefore, claim 5 has been incorporated into claims 1-2 and 14-15. Further, claims 3-4, 6-11 and 13 depend, directly or indirectly, from claim 1 and are thus also allowable. In the same manner, claim 12 depends on claim 2 and is

thus also allowable. Also, claims 16 and 17 now depend, directly or indirectly, from claim 14 and are thus allowable.

Similarly, as discussed above and acknowledged by the Patent Office, claim 24 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Therefore, claim 24 has been incorporated into claims 18 and 19. Claims 20-21, 23 and 26 depend, directly or indirectly, from claim 18 and are thus also allowable.

Similarly, as discussed above and as acknowledged by the Examiner, claim 25 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Therefore, claim 25 has been rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of its base claim and is thus now allowable. Claims 27 and 28 depend on claim 25 are thus also allowable.

As discussed above and as acknowledged by the Patent Office, claim 31 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Therefore, claim 31 has been incorporated into independent claims 29 and 30 and are thus also allowable.

The Patent Office also acknowledged and indicated that claim 32 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Therefore, claim 32 has been rewritten in independent form with all of the limitations of its base claim and is thus now allowable.

Applicants submit this rejection is now moot. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are thus respectfully requested.

B. KATO

Claims 33-34 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Kato et al., U.S. Patent No. 4,414,581 (hereinafter Kato). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 33 has been canceled by Applicants. Claim 34 was rejected by the Examiner on the same basis as claim 33. However, claim 34 differs from claim 33. "Means for writing data representative of the result of ANDing the binary matrix data read out of said data select

means and mask data indicative of a paint-out area of the painting object into the output buffer memory" is recited in claim 34. This limitation is not taught by Kato.

Therefore, Applicants believe that claim 34 is allowable. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are thus respectfully requested.

V. Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 35-36 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Kato in view of Kim, U.S. Patent No. 5,299,030.

Claim 37 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Kato in view of Shu, U.S. Patent No. 5,594,839. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Claims 35 and 36 directly depend on allowable claim 34 and are thus also allowable. Further, claim 37 directly depends on allowable claim 34 and is thus also allowable.

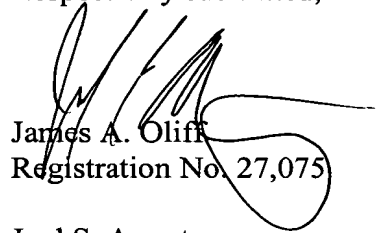
Therefore, reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections are respectfully requested.

VI. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-4, 6-23, 25-30, 32 and 34-37 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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JAO:JSA:LXL/mlv

Attachment:
Replacement Sheets

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